Development of Port Sector

749. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state the action taken to speed up development of the port sector to meet rising cargo traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): An outlay of Rs. 9428 crores has been provided in the 9th Five Year Plan for the development of Port Sector. Steps have also been taken to attract private investment to create additional capacity to meet growing demand of the trade.

A new port at Ennore, 25 kms. north of Chennai, is under construction at an estimated revised cost of Rs. 927.10 crores with assistance from Asian Development Bank with a capacity to handle 16 million tonnes of coal.

Scheme for construction of new ports

750. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of ports in the country is less than the required number.

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that impediments are being faced in development of foreign trade in the country due to less number of ports;

(c) if so, whether it is a fact that Government have worked out any scheme for construction of new ports in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the number of new ports likely to be constructed under the new scheme and by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (d) Cargo handling in ports depends on the cargo handling capacity of ports and not the number of ports. The total cargo handling capacity of the major ports in the country as on 31.3.99 is 240 million tonnes. Against this capacity, major ports handled 251.72 million tonnes of cargo during the year 1998-99.

†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.